

The Rev. Nelson Quinones, Dean 610-653-5858  
The Rev. Jean L. Huber, Assoc. of the Bishop 610-704-5133

Elizabeth Leibenguth, Mission District Chair 484-550-0057  
Mrs. Linda Smith, Newsletter Editor 610-437-9927

**March 2021 LMD NL news will be due February 12, 2021.** E-Mail any information to me at [lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com](mailto:lmd.newslettereditor@gmail.com).

**\*\*REOPENED – Thursdays 9:30-11:30am. Clothes Closet - In NEED of Volunteers** – St. Luke’s, 417 N 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Allentown, PA 18103. Volunteers needed to come in **1 or 2 mornings a week for two hours** to help sort and organize the backlog of clothing for its upcoming reopening this fall. And also, **volunteers to staff it on Thursday mornings** when they open to the public. There is a great need for at least one bi-lingual volunteer. For more information, please contact Leslie Talago at [610-434-3943](tel:610-434-3943).

**COME AWAY TO A QUIET PLACE...** A Brief Pause for Prayerful Renewal in Centering Prayer. Centering Prayer is a particular form of quiet, receptive prayer as taught by Father Thomas Keating and Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault. A portion of each one-hour gathering will include some discussion about centering prayer. So, whether you never heard of centering prayer, are a beginner, or an experienced pray-er, All Are Welcome. **First Friday of each month** led by Ferd Piccuiro and hosted by Pastor Maritza Dolich via Zoom, **10:30 - 11:30 AM** (Sessions held via **Zoom** temporarily until we can all meet together again in person at the Center for Spiritual Awakening). **Please contact Ferd to be placed on the email list with the Zoom information.** [ferdpiccuiro@ptd.net](mailto:ferdpiccuiro@ptd.net) / Cell: [908-310-4228](tel:908-310-4228), Home: [610-737-7871](tel:610-737-7871)

**Thank you** for helping our 2020 Greater Allentown CROP Hunger Walk raise **\$30,329.50** to help our neighbors in need locally and around the globe! What an incredible accomplishment during this pandemic! As a result of your faithful efforts, the Allentown Area Ecumenical Food Bank and Lehigh Conference of Churches Soup Kitchen each received \$3791 for their vital ministries.

**Save These Dates!**

Greater Allentown **CROP Hunger Walk: Sun., Oct. 10, 2021**, 1:30 p.m., with registration beginning at 1:00 p.m. at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown, PA 18104

CROP Recruiters' **Pizza Party/Kick-off: Sun., Aug. 29, 2021**, 1:30-2:30 p.m. (to receive materials, ideas, and inspiration for yourself and your congregation) at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, 140 S. Ott St., Allentown, PA 18104.

For more information about Church World Service/CROP, go to <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/page/about-the-walk>

**SUSPENDED - St. Luke’s ELL and Naturalization Test Study groups** have been **SUSPENDED** due to cautions regarding large gatherings during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Please contact Leslie Talago at [610-434-3943](tel:610-434-3943) for more information.

**OPERATION SUNSHINE**

1933 Hanover Ave.  
Allentown, PA 18109  
Phone: 610-435-9155

Open: Mon 11-3 and Wed. 11-3

E-mail: [LMDopsunshine@aol.com](mailto:LMDopsunshine@aol.com)

Web site: [www.LMDopsunshine.com](http://www.LMDopsunshine.com)

Paula & Dick Skelly Co-Trip Coordinators

**Operation Sunshine is a non-profit fellowship opportunity within our Mission District, run solely by volunteers. Please join us and invite your friends as we enjoy a variety of venues together.**

**WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT DUE TO CANCELLATIONS OF PERFORMANCES BY OUR VENUES, AND FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF OUR TRAVELERS, ALL OPERATION SUNSHINE DAY TRIPS FOR 2020 HAVE BEEN CANCELED.**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO TRAVELING WITH YOU AGAIN IN 2021. WE PLAN TO STARTUP OPERATION SUNSHINE AGAIN IN JUNE 2021.**

**SAVE THE DATES!**

**MAINE – JUNE 7-10, 2021**

Includes Kennebunkport and the Portland Lighthouse 3 Nights lodging, 3 full course dinners including a “Downeast” Lobster Bake, Narrated Harbor Cruise of Casco Bay, Boothbay Harbor Tour, Eartha Revolving Globe, Maine Narrow Gauge Railway, LL Bean and Dexter Factory Outlets, Nubble Lighthouse , taxes, and gratuities included.

Call the Skelly’s at [610-433-6878](tel:610-433-6878) for a complete itinerary and pricing.

On behalf of our new Bishop Christopher deForest, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, and the Lehigh Mission District Council, we want to express our gratitude and appreciation to The Rev. Kurt E. Garbe for his 36 years of ministry.

Pastor Garbe served 24 years as associate to the bishop, 12 years with Bishop David Strobel and 12 years with Bishop Samuel Zeiser. We want to bid Pastor Garbe Godspeed as he journeys into his retirement!

We welcome The Rev. Jean L. Huber, Associate to the Bishop. Pastor Huber is the Synod Staff Liaison in the Lehigh Mission District. Pastor Huber also oversees the Bethlehem-Easton Mission District. She serves at Arndt's Lutheran Church in Easton. Her phone number is above on the newsletter head. Congratulations and welcome to the Mission District!

On January 12, Bishop deForest held a ZOOM Meeting, "Conversation with the Bishop." In attendance there were 133 registered people through their electronic devices.

Bishop deForest gave a 6-year-plan vision for the future ministry within the Synod that includes the new Synod staff. The 6-year-plan is a 3+3 Vital Sign journey expressed through Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond.

**Each of these 3 Vital Signs aim in:**

**Growing Young**

- Nationwide Movement
- Church-wide Support
- NEPS Implemented

**Gaining Strength**

- Leaders
- Congregations
- Adaptive Leadership

**Going Beyond** – "Going Beyond Death to Life"

- Pull Together
- Build a new Strategy
- Assess results

Bishop deForest expressed these 3 Vital Signs forms the vision in a 3+3 year implementation along with the new staffing positions.

**Support Staff**

- Laurie Christmas, Synod's Receptionist
- Debbie Frey, Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry Coordination
- Eric Gombert, Director of Operations
- Debbie Skinner, Benevolence Clerk

**New Positions**

- Mike Bennethum, Executive Associate of the Bishop for Innovations
- Rachael Dietz, Executive Associate of the Bishop for Leadership
- Travis Woodfield, Director of Legacy and Purpose

**Growing Young**

- Sammy Kelly with Rachael Dietz

**Gaining Strength**

- Mike Bennethum with Rachael Dietz

**Going Beyond**

- Travis Woodfield with Mike Bennethum

This brief outline summarizes Bishop deForest's conversation on staffing and vision. I invite you to click [nepasynod.org](http://nepasynod.org) to hear detailed specifics found under "Bishop deForest Talks About Staffing and Vision for the Future".

**Part-time Associates of the Bishop serving as Synod Staff Liaison with mission districts:**

- The Rev. Kathleen Ash-Flashner, Schuylkill Mission District
- The Rev. Lauren Wolfe Blatt, Synod communications and event planning
- The Rev. Charles H. Grube, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Mission District
- The Rev. Jean L. Huber, Bethlehem-Easton and Lehigh Mission District
- The Rev. Niels H. Nielsen, Pocono Mission District
- The Rev. Carl Shankweiler, Hazleton-Lehigh Mission District

Bishop deForest believes that as a Synod we are moved by faith and are supportive, and inventive while seeing the future of the church.

**In faithful assurance,**

*The Rev. Nelson Quiñones, LMD Dean*